

### **AMENDMENTS IN THE ABSTRACT**

The Examiner objected to the abstract because it is not clearly directed to the claimed subject matter. Accordingly, please replace the present abstract with the following rewritten abstract:

A computer implemented method for supplier management and component price negotiation utilizing conference bidding. An experiential database is maintained, listing possible suppliers for each specified assembly component. After receiving responses to a Request for Quotation (RFQ) the database is augmented and the listed suppliers are hierarchically ranked according to multiple scoring parameters. A limited number of suppliers are then selected, based upon the hierarchical rankings, and those suppliers are invited to a bidder's conference. The identity of each supplier invited to the bidder's conference is published to encourage competitive pricing and a final price for each specified assembly component is then negotiated utilizing the bidder's conference format.